2. The Code of Civil Procedure was amended in 1976 to abolish Letters Patent Appeal from judgment of Single Judge of the High Court in Second Appeal (*vide* Section 100-A)

3. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 was amended in 1978 to expedite trial of criminal cases.

4. The sanctioned strength of the High Court Judges has been increased from 351 in March, 1977 to 443 as on 1st April, 1988.

5. The recommendations contained in the 79th Report of the Law Commission on delay and arrears in High Courts and other Appellate Courts are being implemented by the High Courts.

6. The High Courts are taking the following steps to expedite disposal of cases:—

(a) Cases involving, common questions are being grouped together;

(b) Matters are fixed for hearing by giving short returnable dates;

(c) Printing of records is dispensed with in many cases; and

(d) Priority is given to cases requiring quick disposal.

7. The Government have entrusted the Law Commission, the study of the judicial system to introduce necessary reforms. The terms of reference are:—

(a) the need for decentralisation of the system of administration of justice by:

(i) establishing, extending and strengthening in rural areas the institution of Nyaya Panchayats or other mechanisms for resolving disputes;

(ii) setting up a system of participatory justice with defined jurisdiction and powers in suitable areas and centres; and

(iii) establishing other tiers or systems within the judicial hierarchy to reduce the volume of work in the Supreme Court and the High Courts;

(b) the matters for which Tribunals (excluding Services Tribunals) as envisaged in Part-XIVA of the Constitution need to be established expeditiously and various aspects related to their establishment and working;

(c) the procedural laws with a view generally to disposing of cases expeditiously, eliminating, unnecessary litigation, delays in hearing of cases and reforms in procedures and procedural laws and particularly to devising procedures appropriate to the fora envisaged in ittms (a) (i) and (a) (ii);

(d) the method of appointments subordinate courts, subordinate judiciary;

(e) the training of Judicial Officers;

(f) the role of the legal profession in strengthening the system of administration of justice;

(g) the desirability of formulation of the norms, which the Government and the Public Sector Undertakings should follow in the settlement of disputes including a review of the present system for conduct of litigation on behalf of the Government and such Undertakings;

(h) the cost of litigation with a view to lessening the burden on the litigants;

(i) formation of an All India Judicial Service; and

(j) such other matters as the Commission considers proper or necessary for the purposes aforesaid or as may be referred to it from time to time by the Government.

Transfer of Judges

389. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Judges who have been transferred from one High Court to another during the last three years; and

(b) the number of such Judges in each year in each High Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Since 1-4-85, following transfers of puine Judges from one High Court to another have been made:—

1. Shri Justice T. N. Singh, Judge of the Guwahati High Court, transferred as Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, in may, 1985.

2. Shri Justice A.M. Bhattacharjee, Judge of the Sikkim High Court, transferred as Judge of the Calcutta High Court in February, 1986.

3. Shri Justice B. N. Misra, Judge of the Orissa High Court, transferred as Judge of the Allababad High Court, in July, 1986.

Vacancies of the Chief Justices

390. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) as on date, the total number of vacancies of Chief Justices in the High Courts in India; and

(b) the date of each vacancy and the steps being taken to fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) As on 25-4-88, the Office of Chief Justice was vacant in the following four High Courts from the dates indicated below:

Delhi High Court	17.3.88
Madhya Pradesh High Court	19.1.88
Madras High Court	14.3.88
Patna High Court	2.1.88

The appointment of Chief Justices of the High Courts involves consultation with the concerned constitutional authorities.

The appointment of Chief Justice, Patna High Court is to be notified shortly.

Issue of Identity Cards to voters

391. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has recommended to Government to issue multipurpose identity cards to the voters;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government propose to discuss the issue with all the political parties before finalising this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The system of multi-purpose identity cards would require cooperation and coordination with a large number of State and Central agencies. The cost to the exchequer in making available such identity cards to all the voters would also be considerable. All these have to be evaluated before a final decision is taken.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Prime Minister's visit to Japan

392. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the major thrust in the discussions between the Prime Ministers of India and Japan during the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Japan in connection with Festival of India in Japan;

(b) whether some of the trade issues figured prominently in the discussions especially in view of the trade surplus enjoyed by Japan in International trade;

(c) whether any specific projects have been discussed during these talks; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) The strengthening of bilateral relations between India and Japan and the growing under-